

VZCZCXRO2546
PP RUEHPA
DE RUEHAB #0520/01 2171037
ZNY CCCCC ZZH
P 041037Z AUG 08
FM AMEMBASSY ABIDJAN
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 4426
INFO RUEHZK/ECOWAS COLLECTIVE
RHMCSUU/EUCOM POLAD VAIHINGEN GE

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 ABIDJAN 000520

SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: DECL: 07/30/2018
TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [KDEM](#) [SOCI](#) [IV](#)
SUBJECT: FORCES NOUVELLES VIEWS ON IDENTIFICATION,
REDEPLOYMENT OF ADMINISTRATION

REF: ABIDJAN 459

Classified By: EconChief EMassinga, Reasons 1.4 (b,d)

¶1. (C) Summary. During a recent Embassy visit to Bouake and Seguela, senior interlocutors from the Forces Nouvelles (FN) and regional leaders of the RDR political party raised concerns about how the process of identification would proceed. FN political leaders went to great lengths to reject a statement made by President Gbagbo in his July 14 speech in Seguela suggesting that identity cards would not be issued until after the presidential election. RDR leaders in both Bouake and Seguela raised the same concerns, fearing the President would use this as an excuse to prevent hundreds of thousands of newly enfranchised voters, brought into the political system through the audiences foraines process, from getting national ID documents. Emboffs also took stock of the redeployment of the national administration to FN-held territory, and found it limited at best. End Summary.

ID CARDS STILL A CENTRAL FOCUS

¶2. (C) Forces Nouvelles political leaders went to considerable lengths to impress on Emboffs their views about the process of identification, particularly the distribution of identification cards to the newly enfranchised. All were disturbed by the fact that during President Gbagbo's July 14 trip to Seguela, he stated that new identity cards would be distributed after the presidential election. FN Deputy Political Director Cisse Sindou mentioned the statement made by the President, noting with no small amount of vehemence that "while the President can say what he likes, the FN would not accept that." Sindou asserted that the "jugements suppletifs" (birth documentation for unregistered births) distributed during the audiences foraines process now explicitly identify nationality and remove the fear that northerners will be summarily disenfranchised because their nationality will be questioned during the registration process. Sindou also dismissed the notion of a role for the Ministry of Interior in producing national ID cards. He told Emboffs that during negotiations on the Ouagadougou Political Agreement, the subject of identification was especially contentious, even if that had not been reported in the media. The FN, Sindou said, would "not fight and struggle over this in the 2007 negotiations just to see those gains disappear in the electoral end-game."

¶3. (C) RDR representatives also focused intently on the President's statement about distributing identification cards after the election (septel). The RDR leader in Bouake expressed concerns that the FPI would do as it did in 2000, when the winning faction allegedly had the national identification registry scrubbed after the presidential electoral vote.

NATIONAL GOVERNMENT STILL NOT IN CONTROL

14. Interlocutors throughout the FN-controlled territory reported uneven, generally unsatisfactory progress on the redeployment of national administration. A unified treasury bringing local, municipal, regional and national tax revenues under the control of a single, national government authority (vice into the FN central treasury or the pockets of individual ComZones) exists in name only. United Nations Operation in Cote d'Ivoire (UNOCI) officials in Bouake and Seguela reported that the FN continue to collect taxes and deposit them in their own treasury. Eighteen recently redeployed customs officers assigned to work at the Ouangolo border crossing with Burkina Faso have returned to Abidjan due to a lack of agreement between the FN and the central government over how to handle customs receipts.

15. (C) Prefects in both Bouake and Seguela are not in town very often; business, to the degree prefectural offices are operational, is done by deputies. Prefectural officials themselves report they have "zero" to do with security issues. Salary arrears to municipal workers in the FN-controlled zone are a serious issue, as municipalities don't have sufficient tax receipts to meet payrolls. Municipal market taxes come on top of parallel FN taxes, squeezing an already suffering commercial tax base. The RDR mayor of Seguela confirmed that market taxes are being collected by the city, but not so-called corridor or business taxes, which are being collected by the FN. Moreover, 30 percent of Seguela's market taxes are being turned over to the FN under an interim, ad hoc arrangement. These fiscal disruptions are causing programmatic havoc in some cases: in Bouake, CARE can't implement some planned health care programs because the city doesn't have the means to fulfill

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its portion of planned partnership.

16. (SBU) There are some brighter spots. The European Commission is financing the rehabilitation of prisons and buildings used in judicial proceedings. The German development agency GTZ, the EC's contractor, has work currently underway in Bouake and Korhogo. The RDR mayor in Bouake reports he has been doing birth and death registries on his own since 2004, a major boost to upcoming efforts to reconstitute the civil registry. The Prefectural office in Seguela says people can now get attestation of identify documents.

17. (C) Comment: The Forces Nouvelles and the RDR seem intent to lock in the gains they believe they have made on the identification front through the audiences foraines, and are dead-set against any maneuverings by the President that would undermine these gains. The weak redeployment of the national administration appears to result from an intent by the FN to continue to exert their grip of the region as much as tardiness on the central government's part. Overall, the FN appears intent on and capable of exerting political influence on issues of key importance to it in the near future, despite recent challenges to its internal cohesion. End Comment.
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